



Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service

Summer 2010

# Governor Proclaims May 8-15 AmeriCorps Week in Illinois

Governor Pat Quinn stood with AmeriCorps members and proclaimed May 8-15, 2010 as AmeriCorps Week in Illinois. "AmeriCorps volunteers dedicate themselves to service and making a difference throughout Illinois," said Governor Quinn. "On behalf of the people of our state, I thank AmeriCorps members and its alumni for their service and applaud them for their hard work and commitment to strengthening neighborhoods and communities every week of the year."

AmeriCorps Week is devoted to "Getting Things Done." Activities for the week include performing service projects, spreading the word about AmeriCorps, thanking community supporters and partners, recruiting more individuals into service, as well as commending AmeriCorps members, partners, staff, friends, and alumni who dedicate their time and/or resources to perform service all year long.

From neighborhood cleanups and building homes to tutoring children and signing up new volunteers, AmeriCorps alums and members celebrated AmeriCorps Week by doing what they are best at – direct service. According to the Corporation for National and Community Service, across the country from Arizona to Alaska and Georgia to Guam, over 480 events took place during AmeriCorps Week.

In his proclamation, Governor Quinn urged "people throughout the Land of Lincoln to thank AmeriCorps members and alumni for their year of service and to join them in serving our country by finding new ways to build and strengthen our communities together."



*Governor Quinn, with AmeriCorps members, proclaimed May 8-15, 2010 AmeriCorps Week in Illinois.*



## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Serve Illinois Commission is to improve Illinois communities by supporting and enhancing traditional volunteerism and community service and the administration of the AmeriCorps program.

## From the Executive Director



The summer of 2010 continues to be an exciting time for service and volunteerism in our state. The Serve Illinois Commission is proud to announce that nine State AmeriCorps programs were awarded funding through the Corporation for National and Community Service's Competitive funding cycle. These AmeriCorps grants, the first made under the bipartisan Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act signed last year, carry out the vision of the landmark law to expand AmeriCorps and target it on addressing critical national issues of strengthening education, expanding health services, assisting veterans and military families, building a green future, and fostering economic opportunity.

Nationwide, applications for AmeriCorps funding increased significantly this year and competition was stiff. Approximately 60 percent more grant funding was requested in 2010 than in 2009. In the 2010 competition, organizations requested about twice the number of grant dollars and AmeriCorps positions than could be funded.

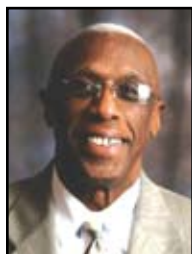
The nine Illinois State AmeriCorps Competitive programs were awarded over four million dollars in federal funds, which will support more than 270 AmeriCorps members this fall. The programs are Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Literacy Volunteers of Illinois, PCC Community Wellness Center, Public Allies Chicago, Rend Lake College, Southwestern Illinois College, Academy for Urban School Leadership, Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois and City Year Chicago.

Please join me in congratulating these programs for their Competitive awards. The Commission believes that AmeriCorps members in these programs will improve our Illinois communities through service to others.

Sincerely,

Ted Gibbs, Executive Director  
Serve Illinois Commission  
Office of Governor Pat Quinn

## From the Chair



As a follow-up to my correspondence with you in the last issue, I am pleased to note that the Serve Illinois Commission, with the Illinois Department of Human Services, has applied to the federal Corporation for National and Community Service for the new Volunteer Generation Fund monies. These dollars, if awarded, will spur the continued success and local-level engagement of nonprofits and volunteer leaders through the Illinois Volunteer Management Network, and related initiatives of the Commission. Further, if these funds are received by Illinois, we hope to enhance opportunities to continue to build those "infrastructure pieces" necessary to engage more citizens in service, and more firmly establish the partnerships we have formed to date. We should find out later this summer the status of our application and will surely make you aware.

Another highlight of recent weeks includes the awarding of 13 individuals – youth, adults, and seniors – with the Governor's Volunteer Service Award at the Executive Mansion (Governor's Mansion) in Springfield on April 12. Jerry Stermer, Chief of Staff to Governor Pat Quinn assisted me and Executive Director Ted Gibbs in presenting the awards on behalf of Serve Illinois and the Office of the Governor. We are grateful to Mr. Stermer for his valuable time, and are especially appreciative of the important volunteer service performed by our awardees and the other 100+ nominees from across the state. Please visit [www.Serve.Illinois.gov](http://www.Serve.Illinois.gov) in the "Volunteer Recognition" section for more information about this, and other recognition programs.

Indeed, it is with pride that I take this opportunity to reinforce the importance of volunteer engagement – both through federal programs like AmeriCorps and also through traditional engagement at a very local level. As we reach out across the State of Illinois to volunteer leaders, managers and nonprofit executives, we at Serve Illinois constantly hear and see firsthand just how important Illinois' volunteers are. Serving in youth and social services, community and economic development, environmental projects, public service organizations, healthcare, and many more places, millions of selfless citizens of our state are making the Land of Lincoln a better place to live and work. We encourage volunteer managers to become involved with the Commission, and we thank all volunteers for your engagement and trust that you will continue your acts of service.

Sincerely,

Howard Lathan  
Chair, Serve Illinois Commission  
Associate Executive Director, Chicago Area Project

## President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll Includes 26 Illinois Schools

This annual award recognizes colleges and universities for their achievement and commitment to community service. Award recipients are selected based upon a series of factors including incentives for service, innovation and scope of the service projects, the degree to which each school provides academic service-learning courses, and the percentage of student involvement in service activities. According to the Corporation for National and Community Service, "President Obama has pledged to make service a central cause of his administration and wishes to commemorate the significant role that higher institutions, their students, staff, and faculty play in helping to solve pressing social problems in the nation's communities."



The 2009 Illinois award recipients include Adler School of Professional Psychology, Benedictine University, Bradley University, Concordia University Chicago, DePaul University, Governors State University, Illinois Institute of Technology, Kaskaskia College, Knox College, McKendree University, Midwestern University, North Central College, North Park University, Northern Illinois University, Parkland College, Rockford College, Roosevelt University, Saint Xavier University, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, The University of Chicago, Trinity Christian College, Trinity International University, University of Illinois-Springfield, Western Illinois University, and Wilbur Wright College of the City Colleges of Chicago.

## AmeriCorps Members Share Service Stories During Annual Dome Day

Members from Service Programs from across Illinois gathered Tuesday, April 13 at the State Capitol in Springfield to engage public officials and shine the light on service for the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Illinois Dome Day.

After a morning rally in the Capital's rotunda, members and staff from more than 15 AmeriCorps programs shared stories of their service with more than 50 members of the Illinois General Assembly. AmeriCorps members participating with City Year Chicago shared stories about the difference they are making in Chicago Public Schools and invited legislators to upcoming physical service days that will be held in their communities.

In addition to providing members the opportunity to share their AmeriCorps service stories, participants were also able to gain insights about the legislative process through observing sessions and touring the capital.

Overall, participating organizations had a positive experience during the event. "I wish more of our members came," said one participating staff member. "I suggested that our Program Director make it mandatory!"

— Submitted by Johnny Barr, Director of External Relations, City Year Chicago.



Commission on Volunteerism  
and Community Service

*Serve.Illinois.gov*

### COMMISSION MEMBERS

Howard L. Lathan, Chair, Chicago  
Rosemary Keefe, Vice Chair, Glenview  
Jane Angelis, Ph.D., Carbondale  
Donald Baden, Ed.D., Fairview Heights  
Andrew Barbeau, Chicago  
Lawrence Benito, Chicago  
Julian Brown, Naperville  
Mary Ellen Caron, Chicago  
Jocelyn D. Cheng, Chicago  
Becharo Choucair, M.D., Chicago  
Merri Dee, Chicago  
Judy Donath, Springfield  
Kathy Engelken, Des Plaines  
Alvin Goldfarb, Ph.D., Macomb  
Jill C. Heise, Chicago  
John Hosteny, Chicago  
Nancy K. Jameson, Macomb  
Christopher Koch, Springfield  
Michael Mangan, Mt. Prospect  
Terry Mason, Chicago  
Bob McCammon, Lake Villa  
Arlan McClain, Dixon  
Frederick D. Nettles, Jr., Springfield  
Mary Kelly Reffett, LaSalle  
Genita C. Robinson, Chicago  
Fred Rodriguez, Ph.D., Western Springs  
Giraldo Rosales, Champaign  
Cynthia Sims, Ed.D., Carbondale  
John Sirek, Chicago  
Todd Stroger, Chicago  
Judy Swinson, Centralia  
Barbara Tubekis, Winnetka  
Albert D. Tyson, III, Chicago  
Gloria Verastegui, Gilberts  
Jody Weis, Chicago  
Steven S. Wolfe, Glen Ellyn

### COMMISSION STAFF

Ted Gibbs, Executive Director  
Lisa Hooker, AmeriCorps Program Officer  
Scott Niermann, Volunteer Programs Manager  
Scott McFarland, Resources & Information Manager  
Eden Lawson, Graduate Public Service Intern



# NUMBERS

## you should know

### New Federal Report Shows Greatest Spike in Volunteers Since 2003

Despite difficult economic times, the number of Americans volunteering in their communities jumped by 1.6 million last year, the largest increase in six years, according to a report released by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Volunteer rate went up among all race and ethnic groups.

The Corporation's annual *Volunteering in America* report found that 63.4 million Americans volunteered through a formal organization last year, giving more than 8.1 billion hours of volunteer service worth an estimated \$169 billion. Higher rates of homeownership, lower rates of foreclosure, shorter average commute times, more robust nonprofit infrastructure, lower poverty rates and higher education levels are related to higher rates of volunteering.

#### Key Findings in Illinois:

- Overall 2.8 million Illinoisans (age 16 and older) volunteered in 2009, an increase of almost 300,000 since 2008. This is the first significant increase in the volunteer rate and the largest single year increase in the volunteer numbers since 2002-2003.
- Volunteers in Chicago contribute an average of 27.9 hours per resident. (Based on a three-year average 2007-2009).
- In Illinois' smaller cities, Champaign's average rate of 32.4 percent, was followed by Peoria (29.7%) and Rockford (27.6%). Kankakee (21.4%) was also included in the study. Of these cities, Peoria also had the highest number of hours per resident at 38.8 hours. (Based on 2005-2009 data).
- Volunteers in Illinois contributed an estimated \$6.6 billion of service to communities statewide.

The Volunteering In America report is a partnership between the Corporation for National and Community Service, the U.S. Census Bureau, and the Bureau for Labor Statistics to collect volunteering data annually through the Current Population Survey's (CPS) Supplement on Volunteering. The CPS is a monthly survey of about 60,000 households (approximately 100,000 adults), conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Volunteers are defined as individuals ages 16 and over who perform unpaid volunteer activities for or through an organization. The report includes information for all 50 states, Washington, DC, and 198 cities, including 51 large cities, 75 mid-size cities, and 72 additional cities, based on Metropolitan Statistical Areas. For more information, visit [VolunteeringInAmerica.gov](http://VolunteeringInAmerica.gov).

# LEADERCORPS

## update

### LeaderCorps Members Gather for Year-End Retreat

LeaderCorps members gathered at Starved Rock State Park in Utica, Illinois in May for an end of the year retreat. The three-day retreat provided members an opportunity for training, reflection and service while enjoying the beautiful scenery at Starved Rock. Dale Evans, who led trainings at the fall conference, returned to help LeaderCorps members reflect on their term of service and prepare for "Life After AmeriCorps."



*Chelsey Clammer, LeaderCorps member from Alternatives, pulling weeds at the Starved Rock Visitors Center.*

Members shared their service experiences, plans for National AmeriCorps Week and suggestions for the 2010-2011 LeaderCorps group. Starved Rock was a beautiful setting for the retreat and many members explored the gorgeous trails.



*Brittany Potter, LeaderCorps member from the Greater Chicago Food Depository, clearing one of the garden beds outside of the Starved Rock Visitors Center.*

One of the highlights of the retreat was performing a service project at the Starved Rock Visitors Center.

LeaderCorps members helped landscape by weeding, removing trash and spreading mulch in the large garden beds outside the center. The retreat was a wonderful way to conclude the 2009-2010 LeaderCorps year.

— Submitted by Micaela Moran, National Days of Service Coordinator for LeaderCorps, and Program Leader for AmeriCorps Project YES!

## MISSION

The mission of LeaderCorps is to connect AmeriCorps programs in Illinois through state, national and global days of service and to promote continued AmeriCorps alumni involvement.

# spotlight

## Serve America Act: One Year Later

### *A New Era of Growth, Innovation and Impact for National Service*

On April 21, 2009, President Obama signed the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, the most sweeping expansion of national service in a generation. Its swift bipartisan journey through Congress reflected a national consensus that service is a powerful response to the economic and social challenges facing America today. One year later, volunteering is up, momentum is strong and a new vision for service is taking effect, said Patrick Corvington, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service. "Service is the great force that unites us all as Americans," Corvington said in the keynote address at a luncheon to honor Senator Kennedy's legacy and the anniversary of the legislation.

"The Serve America Act positions citizen service at the center of our nation's response to crises in education, health, clean energy, veterans and economic opportunity. And it challenges us to do a better job of demonstrating and measuring our ability to solve problems," Corvington stated. He added, "We must not only try, we must succeed. In fulfilling the promise of the Serve America Act, we must transform service from a hope and a dream to a real solution."

To implement the Serve America Act, Congress fully funded the President's FY 2010 request of \$1.149 billion for the Corporation, an historic funding increase. The budget increases each of the Corporation's existing programs and fund new ones. President Obama's FY 2011 request of \$1.4 billion will further expand this path of growth and impact. Corvington outlined four major goals the Corporation has set for implementing the legislation:

- To make service a solution to our national challenges such as historic unemployment levels and poverty;
- To expand opportunities for more Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve;
- To build the capacity of individuals, nonprofits, corporations and communities by giving them the tools they need to succeed; and
- To embrace innovation by expanding proven programs and seeding promising emerging ones.

#### **Among other things, the Act:**

- Sets AmeriCorps on a path to more than triple in size from 75,000 members annually to 250,000 by 2017.
- Increases the amount of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award to match the maximum Pell Grant level and allows individuals 55 and older to transfer their award to a child or grandchild.
- Strengthens the nation's civic infrastructure through creation of a Volunteer Generation Fund to help nonprofits recruit, manage, and support more volunteers, and the Nonprofit Capacity Building Program to improve nonprofits' performance in communities facing resource hardships.
- Creates a Social Innovation Fund to promote public and private investments in effective nonprofit organizations to help them replicate and expand to serve more low-income communities.
- Provides an on ramp for millions of working Americans to serve by establishing a nationwide call to service campaign, United We Serve, and establishes September 11 as a National Day of Service and Remembrance.

For more information, visit: [www.nationalservice.gov/about/serveamerica](http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/serveamerica).

## Serve Illinois Commission Launches Statewide Plan of Action for Inclusion

The Serve Illinois Commission has launched a statewide Plan of Action (POA) initiating a movement toward Inclusion within our AmeriCorps programs. The plan grew out of a visioning process, which began in Albuquerque, New Mexico last December during a training provided by the National Service Inclusion Project (NSIP). As a part of this plan, the Commission directed resources toward providing training for AmeriCorps Program Directors regarding Disability Awareness, Inclusive Strategies for recruitment and retention, legal responsibilities of the Grantee, as well as information regarding accommodations for service members who have a disability. In an effort to meet the needs of Program Directors, a pre-training survey was sent out inviting responses to what they felt would be most beneficial to them. The training was tailored in response to the survey.

Trainers from NSIP facilitated two trainings – Belleville on April 27 and Joliet on April 29. During the presentations, participants shared ideas, raised questions, made suggestions and had an opportunity to envision how their individual programs could become more inclusive. Most of the program participants also applied for the Commission's first round of mini-grants aimed at inclusive strategies or recruitment initiatives. The training provided information to assist them in implementing the mini-grant proposals. The mini-grant round was the first and another step in the POA for Illinois.

A third training provided by the NSIP for the Commission's Pilot Project initiated the NW Region Inclusion Team. The team was developed in March and training was provided April 30 in Dixon. The next meeting will focus on mission statements and formulation of goal setting.

Please contact the Commission staff at 800.592.9896 or the Disability Outreach Coordinator at 815.288.6691, ext. 282 for further information regarding the Disability Inclusion effort in Illinois.

– Submitted by Lois Barnhard, Serve Illinois Disability Outreach Coordinator, Kreider Services.



# Everyone Has Something to Give

***“Everybody can be great because everybody can serve.”***

This quote by Martin Luther King, Jr. is the mantra of the Fostering Transitions AmeriCorps program at Children's Home in Peoria. Over 80 percent of our AmeriCorps Members are former clients who struggled to find or maintain employment often due to an underlying mental health issue, childhood trauma or learning difficulty. They now serve their community to gain valuable career and educational opportunities, give back to those who



*Arnesha Cannon-Funches tosses the last bag of trash into the truck following our neighborhood sweep during the Great American Clean up on April 17.*

helped them overcome obstacles and empower their peers. This Corps proves that everyone has something to give.

Members serve as mentors, tutors, job coaches and life coaches to help address the educational and employment issues of our community's most vulnerable youth – fostering the transition from adolescence to adulthood. Members provide tutoring and homework assistance at after-school programs; help youth in transition find employment and safe housing; complete financial aid and college enrollment forms with teen mothers; and teach life skills to at-risk youth.

During their orientation, members participated in the United Way Day of Caring (held on Patriot's Day, September 11). Members read to students at three HeadStart locations and helped plant flowers on the playgrounds. Children's Home staff hoped this experience would help Members learn about the community and inspire them to implement three service projects as a group during the year. By leveraging additional resources, collaborating with community partners and adapting projects to meet volunteer and community needs, Members are on track to complete nearly 20 projects.

## Service projects included:

- Partnering with neighborhood associations for a neighborhood clean up as part of the Great American Clean Up;

- Collaborating with the Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity at Bradley University to collect non-perishable food items for homeless youth to help them establish their first apartment;
- Hosting an Access to Health Care/STD Awareness Week with informational tables and free on-site STD testing by collaborating with a SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) group, the health department and in-school health center.

Members are proud of using the internet to communicate with and mobilize volunteers from as far away as Georgia, Arizona and Texas for the annual Keepsacks for Kids project. The project collects hand-tied fleece blankets for local service providers as part of Make a Difference Day. Members linked this project to the Disney Give-a-Day, Get-a-Day promotion which encouraged families to volunteer together and rewarded them with Disney passes. Fostering Transitions hoped to collect 150 to 200 blankets for the project, but their efforts resulted in nearly 140 families volunteering and 1,030 blankets collected.



*Carrie and John with some of the 1,030 blankets collected for our Keepsacks for Kids event as part of the Disney Give-a-Day, Get-a-Day promotion.*

The program plans to expand the number and scope of service projects by establishing corporate partnerships. One such partnership is with ERIE Insurance. In May, the program received over \$17,000 from their Charity Golf Outing. Additionally, ERIE Insurance will support the development and implementation of two service projects in 2010-11 when the Peoria Branch awards its first Giving Network grant for \$10,000 to Fostering Transitions AmeriCorps.

For more information about Children's Home, please visit [www.chail.org](http://www.chail.org).

– Submitted by Julie Siebert, Program Development Specialist, Children's Home Association of Illinois.



## Find a Volunteer Opportunity Today!

Visit  
*Serve.Illinois.gov*



In addition to the searchable portal of over 68,000 volunteer opportunities statewide, *Serve.Illinois.gov* hosts a wide variety of volunteer resources:

- National Service Program Information (AmeriCorps, SeniorCorp & Learn and Serve America)
- Statewide Volunteer Management Network Conference & Meeting Information
- Volunteerism Research & Publications
- Related Nonprofit & Volunteerism Web Links
- Serve Illinois Calendar of Events

If your agency has upcoming volunteerism or national service events, Web site links or professional development resources for web or newsletter publication, please send it to [dhs.serveillinois@illinois.gov](mailto:dhs.serveillinois@illinois.gov) for consideration.

## Spring Regional Conferences Continue to Grow and Attract New Attendees

The Illinois Conference on Volunteer Administration (ICOVA) and the East Central Illinois Volunteerism Conference (ECIVC) drew 280 participants. ICOVA ([www.icova.info](http://www.icova.info)) held May 13-14 in River Forest drew national volunteerism experts from Indiana, Oklahoma, Virginia and North Carolina, including Dale Safrit, Ed.D., of North Carolina State University and Editor, International Journal of Volunteer Administration. Commissioner Merri Dee, former WGN-TV Chicago television personality, gave the morning keynote address, and Dominican University hosted the event.

Held June 10 in Normal, ECIVC, in its second year, attracted 160 participants to Heartland Community College. The conference partnered with University of Illinois Extension's annual Leadership Conference to plan back-to-back events in the same community. Extension's event was held June 9. Tim Miles opened the conference with an entertaining and educational morning lecture, while Connie Pirtle of *VolunteerToday.com*'s "Ask Connie", hailing from Washington, D.C., concluded the event. Some workshops and session handouts will be available online at [www.ecivc.net](http://www.ecivc.net) in the near future.

For more information, visit the conference websites or contact the Serve Illinois Commission. Stay tuned for upcoming similar events in a community near you!

## SAVE THE DATE

### 1st Annual Northwest Illinois Volunteerism Conference

August 5, 2010

Sauk Valley Community College, Dixon, IL

[www.nwivc.net](http://www.nwivc.net)



### Southern Illinois Volunteerism Conference

September 23, 2010

Holiday Inn, Mt. Vernon, IL

[www.sivc.net](http://www.sivc.net)



### West Central Illinois Volunteerism Conference

October 28, 2010

Wesley United Methodist Church, Macomb, IL

[www.wcivc.net](http://www.wcivc.net)



## ARE YOU ON OUR MAILING LIST?

If you would like to receive this newsletter or to make changes to your information, please send us your:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Clip and mail to: SERVE ILLINOIS Editor  
535 W. Jefferson Street, 3rd Floor, Springfield, Illinois 62702  
Fax/Email to: 217.557.0515 or [DHS.ServeIllinois@Illinois.gov](mailto:DHS.ServeIllinois@Illinois.gov)



---

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 392  
Springfield, IL

---

Prevention First  
2800 Montvale Drive  
Springfield, IL 62704

*“Building Stronger Communities Through Service”*

## Upcoming Days of Service

September 11, 2010	9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance – <a href="http://www.911dayofservice.org">www.911dayofservice.org</a>
September 19, 2010	National Neighborhood Day – <a href="http://www.neighborhoodday.org">www.neighborhoodday.org</a>
October 17-23, 2010	Kids Care Week – <a href="http://www.kidscare.org">www.kidscare.org</a>
October 23, 2010	Make a Difference Day – <a href="http://www.makeadifferenceday.com">www.makeadifferenceday.com</a>
November 18, 2010	World’s Largest Thanksgiving Dinner – <a href="http://www.goallstars.org">www.goallstars.org</a>
November 20, 2010	National National Family Volunteer Day – <a href="http://www.familyvolunteerday.org">www.familyvolunteerday.org</a>



*SERVE ILLINOIS* is a publication of the Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism & Community Service. Send articles for submission and suggestions to:

*SERVE ILLINOIS* Editor  
Illinois Commission on Volunteerism & Community Service  
815 E. Monroe St., Springfield, IL 62701  
[DHS.SERVEIllinois@Illinois.gov](mailto:DHS.SERVEIllinois@Illinois.gov)  
800.592.9896 TTY 888.261.2713



*Illinois AmeriCorps Disability Outreach Project: Meeting the needs for AmeriCorps Members of all backgrounds and abilities.*

*This material is based upon work supported by the Corporation for National and Community Service under AmeriCorps Grant No. 07CAHIL001. Opinions or points of view expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Corporation for National and Community Service or the AmeriCorps program.*

